

Jan. 23 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

an Executive order waiving the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act with respect to Mongolia.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
January 23, 1991.

Note: The Executive order is listed in Appendix E at the end of this volume.

Remarks to the Reserve Officers Association

January 23, 1991

Thank you, General Bob Hope. And I'm pleased to see so many Members of Congress here tonight. I don't want to get in trouble, but I want to single out Senator Strom Thurmond; Senator Ted Stevens; and, of course, a great friend of the Reserve, my old friend, Sonny Montgomery over here—the General. And all the rest of the Members who are with us tonight.

My apologies to all for speaking before the broccoli and leaving—[laughter]—but given the circumstances, I'm sure you'll understand. And I am proud to share this evening with the leadership of the Reserve Officers Association, and I am deeply honored to be named Minuteman of the Year. But I know tonight our thoughts go out to men and women earning the honor of a grateful nation at this very moment: the citizen-soldiers, 100,000 strong, serving now with the coalition forces in the Gulf. And I salute them, each and every one.

Those American Reservists are part of an allied force standing against the forces of aggression—standing up for what is right. They serve alongside hundreds of thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen of 27 other nations—all united against the aggression of Saddam Hussein.

As we meet right here tonight, we are exactly 1 week into Operation Desert Storm. But it is important to date this conflict not from January 16th, but from its true beginning: the assault of August 2d, Iraq's unprovoked aggression against the tiny nation of Kuwait. We did not begin a war 7 days ago. Rather, we began to end a war—to right a wrong that the world simply could not ignore.

From the day Saddam's forces first

crossed into Kuwait, it was clear that this aggression required a swift response from our nation and the world community. What was, and is, at stake is not simply our energy or economic security and the stability of a vital region but the prospects for peace in the post-cold-war era—the promise of a new world order based upon the rule of law.

America was not alone in confronting Saddam. No less than 12 resolutions of the United Nations Security Council condemned the invasion, demanding Iraq's withdrawal without condition and without delay. The United Nations put in place sanctions to prevent Iraq from reaping any reward from its outlaw act. Countries from six continents sent forces to the Gulf to demonstrate the will of the world community that Saddam's aggression would not stand.

Appeasement—peace at any price—was never an answer. Turning a blind eye to Saddam's aggression would not have avoided war; it would only have delayed the world's day of reckoning, postponing what ultimately would have been a far more dangerous, a far more costly conflict.

Unfortunately, in spite of more than 5 months of sustained diplomatic efforts by the Arab League, the European Community, the United States, and the United Nations, Saddam Hussein met every overture of peace with open contempt. In the end, despite the world's prayers for peace, Saddam brought war upon himself.

Tonight, after 1 week of allied operations, I am pleased to report that Operation Desert Storm is right on schedule. We have dealt—and I salute General McPeak and the airmen flying under the United Com-

mand out there, from the Navy and the Marines, as well as, of course, the Air Force; I salute him—we dealt a severe setback to Saddam's nuclear ambitions. Our pinpoint attacks have put Saddam out of the nuclear bomb-building business for a long time to come. Allied aircraft enjoy air superiority, and we are using that superiority to systematically deprive Saddam of his ability to wage war effectively.

We are knocking out many of their key airfields. We're hitting their early warning radars with great success. We are severely degrading their air defenses. The main danger to allied aircraft now comes from some 20,000 antiaircraft guns in the Baghdad area alone. And let me say, I am proud of the way our aviators are carrying out their tasks. In head-to-head combat, our jet fighters have destroyed 19 Iraqi jets. And they have hit, at most, one American jet in aerial combat.

Step by step, we are making progress towards the objectives that have guided the world's response since August 2d: the liberation of Kuwait and the restoration of stability and security in the Gulf. And there can be no doubt: Operation Desert Storm is working. There can be no pause now that Saddam has forced the world into war. We will stay the course—and we will succeed—all the way.

As I said on the 3d day of this campaign, war is never cheap or easy. There will be problems. There will be setbacks. There will be more sacrifices. But let me say I have every reason to be very pleased with our progress to date.

Saddam has sickened the world with his use of Scud missiles—those inaccurate bombs that indiscriminately strike cities and innocent civilians in both Israel and Saudi Arabia. These weapons are nothing more than tools of terror, and they do nothing but strengthen our resolve to act against a dictator unmoved by human decency.

Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom said it well yesterday. "Saddam," he said, "may yet become a target of his own people. It is perfectly clear that this man is amoral. He takes hostages, he attacks population centers, he threatens prisoners. He's a man without pity, and whatever his fate may be," said Prime Minister Major,

"I, for one, will not weep for him." No one should weep for this tyrant when he is brought to justice—no one, anywhere in the world.

I watched, along with all of you, that repulsive parade of American airmen on Iraqi television—one more proof of the savagery of Saddam. But I knew as they read their prepared statements criticizing this country that those were false words forced on them by their captors. I saw one of General McPeak's kids—one American pilot yesterday was asked why he was sure the pilots were coerced, their statements false. And he said, "I know that because these guys are Americans." He could well have said the same thing about the other pilots being held—from Britain, Italy, and Kuwait—all men of courage and valor, too.

Tonight, I repeat my pledge to you and to all Americans: This will not be another Vietnam. Never again will our Armed Forces be sent out to do a job with one hand tied behind their back. They will continue to have the support they need to get the job done, get it done quickly, and with as little loss of life as possible. And that support is not just military, but moral—measured in the support our servicemen and women receive from every one of us here at home. When the brave men and women of Desert Storm return home, they will return to the love and respect of a grateful nation. And with that in mind, I'd like to say to every family of every man or woman serving overseas: We're thinking of you, and you are in our prayers.

And that is where I will close—with the aim of protecting American lives and seeing the heroes of Desert Storm return home safe and sound. All life is precious, whether it's the life of an American pilot or an Iraqi child. And yet, if life is precious, so, too, are the living principles of liberty and peace—principles that all Americans cherish above all others, principles that you and your comrades on duty tonight have pledged to defend.

Thank you for this warm welcome tonight and for your strong support. And may God bless the United States of America. Thank you very, very much.

Jan. 23 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

Note: The President spoke at 7:42 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Robert C. Hope, ret., president of the Reserve Officers Association; Senators Strom

Thurmond and Ted Stevens; Representative G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Gen. Merrill A. McPeak, Air Force Chief of Staff; and Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom.

Exchange With Reporters

January 24, 1991

Meeting With Republican Leaders

Q. Mr. President, do you subscribe to Mr. Yeutter's suggestion that the vote against the war resolution be an issue in the next election?

The President. We're here today to talk about a wide array of issues. This is my first meeting, formal meeting, with the Republican leadership. We've been in touch on the Hill, obviously, because of the Gulf, with the Democrats and Republicans. But we're moving forward now towards a new domestic agenda that's going to require a lot of legislation, and that's what the subject matter here is. We will have a briefing on the number one issue of the day, the Gulf crisis. We'll probably be talking about events inside the Soviet Union that concern all of us, Democrats and Republican alike. And then we'll focus in on the domestic agenda. And that's the last question I'll answer.

Thank you all very much.

Secretary Yeutter. And you need a little more precision on what Mr. Yeutter said. [Laughter]

Q. What did you say?

Secretary Yeutter. We'll tell you about that later.

Q. —that you said it, Mr. Yeutter. Is that a not—is he misquoting you, sir?

Secretary Yeutter. I will have more to say on that 4 weeks from now.

Q. Why wait that long?

Q. Four weeks?

Q. Truth should be told immediately.

Note: This exchange began at 10:05 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. Secretary of Agriculture Clayton K. Yeutter was nominated to be chairman of the Republican National Committee. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Arab-American Leaders

January 25, 1991

Normally I don't have much to say at these meetings with the press. We do that in the press room. But I do want to thank you all for coming. I'm anxious to hear what you've discussed with Governor Sununu.

But I want to take this opportunity to tell you something that bothers me because I've heard from some and then I've read accounts that suggest Arab-Americans in this country, because of the conflict abroad, are being discriminated against, and it's causing pain in families in this country. And

there is no room for discrimination against anybody in the United States of America. And I want you to suggest to me if there are things that I can do as President to get that message out loud and clear to every Arab-American; whether he agrees with me on this war or not is unimportant.

The message is: There is no place for discrimination in the United States of America. And if there's anybody in the communities